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Songs and Symphonies

by

Nathan Rosenbaum

1. Poetry, American

NBI

Rosenblum

Songs and Symphonies

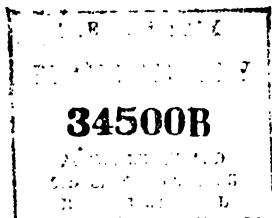
BY

NATHAN ROSENBAUM



Philadelphia
FERRIS & LEACH
1919





DEDICATED
TO
MY DEAR PARENTS

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Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger and the
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DEDICATION.

To the dreams I have dreamed
And that never came true,
To the visions that gleamed
And were then lost to view,

To the songs left unsung,
To the beauty unseen,
These few melodies flung
From a rapture too keen.

To the future I keep,
To the past that has flown,
These few flowers I reap
From the seeds I have sown.



Symphonies

SYMPHONY PATHETIQUE.

I.

Twilight—
Evening clad in silken garments
Leans from out the jewelled
Sunset-colored windows
Of the day,
And lets her clouds
Of perfumed hair
Fall upon the heavens ;
Then she wanders thru the valleys,
Singing sadly,
Singing slowly :
“Sorrow waits for all men born.”

II.

Soft in the silence
Shadows are falling—
Beautiful lace work
Of light and of darkness,
Heralds of the unborn
Loveliness of night.
Soft in the silence
Shadows are falling,
Troops of ghosts
In the silver stillness
Of the haunted twilight,
Soft as the flight
Of birds in mid-air ;
Till the world seems to swim
On the waves of the ocean
Of shadows.

Facing the forlorn horizons of night
Here in the dying twilight
Falling from the sky
Like the ashes of day,

My soul stands
Like a temple rising aloft
From the ruins of happiness,
Filled with the splendor
Of heaven-born visions,
Filled with the fire
Of beautiful dreams
That come and go
Like the shifting shadows,
Lighting the darkness
Like flaming torches
Lit by the fires of Beauty,
Beauty who sings to me,
Beauty who croons to me:
"Sorrow waits for all men born."

III.

The tall slender trees
Lean their lofty heads
On the peace-giving bosom
Of evening,
Weary from gazing
At heavens too far from them,
Heart-sick from unsatisfied longing
To clasp the bright stars
In their arms.
And the vagabond winds
Thru their down-hanging branches
Wander alone,
All alone
Like my soul, in the world.
Softly, softly
The wind prowls
Thru the passionate silence,
Moaning, moaning,
Moaning incessantly:
"Sorrow waits for all men born."

Hark !
In the heart of
The brooding darkness,
Like a sob that rises
And falls in its anguish,
And rises and rises
In the pain of its travail
Till it knocks—
Till it beats
With the hands of revolt
On the gates of the heavens ;
Till it reaches the ears of God,
Telling the pain and the torture—
Crying aloud the woe and the bitterness
Of Mankind ;
A nightingale
Sings the dirge of day.
How it climbs on the crests
Of the night-waves !
How it speaks of profundities
Of pain and of sorrow !
How it crashes like heavy hammers
On the soul !
With its terrible rhythm—
With its damnable refrain :
"Sorrow waits for all men born."

Is it only a bird
That sings in the tree-tops ?
Or is it a chorus
Of thousands of souls
Lost in the forests of life,
Crying in bitterness—
Crying in anguish :
"Sorrow waits for all men born."



IV.

One by one
The great white stars
Like lilies of silver
Waving in heaven,
Or huge blind moths
Swarming around the moon,
Rise and fall on
The waves of darkness.
And my soul stands naked
Under their majesty,
Pierced by their spears
Of pity and silence.
And Sorrow—
Sorrow with dew-sweet hair and bosom
And face the color
Of wan-white marble
Perfect in loveliness—
Stands in the dense shade
Wrapped in the silence,
Waiting—waiting
With outstretched arms
And bitter-sweet kisses
For me.

SYMPHONY OF THE DYING YEAR.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

The melancholy days of Autumn
Are here;
The world is filled with sad splendor
That makes the heart overflow
With poignant sorrow.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

It is calm—
The wine of silence
Is spilled upon the earth
From the velvet dimness of the sky.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

The dead leaves are falling
From the tree-tops;
Saffron and mellow-red,
Tarnished-gold and ashen-brown.
The dead leaves are falling
From the tree-tops,
Covering the damp mellow earth,
Hiding the winding roads,
Floating upon the breasts
Of purple-blue waters.
The dead leaves are falling,
Slowly falling,
Falling.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

The dead leaves are falling
From the tree-tops,
Like little wan shadows
Blown here and there
By vagrant winds.
The dead leaves are falling
From the tree-tops,
Softly they settle on the ground
Forming a velvet carpet
For the feet of evening.
The dead leaves are falling,
Softly falling,
Falling.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

The tall, gaunt trees
Stand naked
Against the brooding sky,
Like souls stripped of their shams.
Gesticulating with their long fingers,
Bowing to the will of the winds,
The tall gaunt trees
Stand naked
Upon the dilapidated landscape.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

The silver waters of the fountain
Rise and rise and rise
Into the air,
As if they hoped to reach the sky,
Then they fall
Into the marble basins
Like crystal tears.
The waters of the fountain
Falling, falling.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

In the Autumn—
Life and Death
Kiss with gentle lips ;
Sorrow and Joy
Fall asleep together
In the cool shadows ;
Here is sadness and pain
But also peace.

*Sonia, listen to the lamentation of the winds
Among the dead leaves.*

Sonia—
Some day our love that seems deathless
Will wither and fall
Like a dead leaf.
Soon our youth will vanish
Like a shadow,
And age will come
And we will be dead leaves.

Sonia,
Kiss me!

Evening has fallen
From the sky,
And the moon like a dead leaf
Rises and falls
Upon the sea of stars.
Come—
Let us go!

THE GARDEN OF HESPERIDES.

(*From the painting of Albert Herter.*)

SYMPHONY FANTASTIQUE.

I.

It is the temple
Of immortal Gods,
Where the soul is drowned
In fathomless wells of beauty.
It is a land of languid loveliness
That makes the spirit
Ache with too much splendor.
It is a radiant vision
Seen in the fantastic-colored
Dreams of an opium smoker.

II.

The Dawn—
The light-footed Pavlowa
Swathed in silver-shining veils
Tip-toes upon the stage of heaven,
Then flinging her flimsy robes
Over the garden,
Dances—
Radiantly naked—
Upon the sky.

Lo!
The Monarch—
The Light-Bringer—
Robed in flaming tapestries of fire
Mounts his golden steeds
And rides across the color-blazing
Road of heaven,
Gilding the garden
With Midas-like fingers;

Sowing the waters
With glittering jewels,
Till he wearies of the day
And lays his golden-haired head
Upon the breast of evening,
Flinging the flamboyant banners of the sunset
Upon the barbaric splendor of the west.

Softly
Like a sob in the dark
The sunset slips into dusk;
And the gentle moon
Like a frightened fawn
Wanders thru the star-lit
Forests of the sky,
Fondling the garden
With mother-hands;
Washing her silver hair
In the waters of the sleeping streams;
Whispering lovely fairy tales
To the trees and flowers
Till they fall asleep.

The moon is a silver galleon
Sailing upon the star-spattered
Sea of the sky,
Laden with white opaline tapestries of visions,
Soft silken stuffs of dreams,
Green emeralds of fantastic fairy tales,
Red rubies like flaming roses of desire,
And golden doubloons jingling in the hold
To purchase fairyland.

The moon is the fire
On the altar of the Gods,
And the multitudes of flashing stars
Are the flaming torches
Of the worshippers.

The moon is a stately prima donna
Singing songs of moonlight,
And the stars
Are slim fair-faced ballet dancers
Swaying to and fro
To the wondrous music of tiny silver bells
Swinging in the towers of the sky.

III.

In the early morning
When the long caravans of day
Start across the deserts of the heavens,
The tall shapely trees,
Clad in raiment of brilliant green,
Golden-yellow and brown,
Clasp hands and dance
A wild bacchanal,
Tossing their long green arms
In the air,
Swaying and swinging
To the wild elfin music
Of fairy flutes.

In the dusk
The trees run up the slopes of the hills,
Playing hide and seek
In the cool shadows.

In the star-drowned night
They bend their loftly heads
Over low-gurgling streams,
Listening to the tremulous tinkling
Of the waters over smooth stones.

IV.

Under the fruit-laden
Tree of heaven,
Bending its huge branches,
Heavy with golden apples,
To the ground,

They sit and dream and slumber
Dreaming wondrous dreams ;
Lulled by the silver sounds
Of singing waters,
And the tender caresses
Of poppy-laden winds.

Theirs is an immortal beauty
That makes the spirit
Mad with the pain of perfection.
Their supple, shapely limbs
Outstretched in sleep
Upon the flower-embroidered ground,
Are as white as sea-foam ;
Their perfumed clouds of hair
Crown the white glory
Of their faces ;
Their blue-veined, rose-tinted,
Peony-budded breasts
Gleam in the shadows
Like white moonlight
On purple-black waters.

V.

Here in the languorous land
Purged of all passion and sorrow,
Where the spirits of love and peace
Reign eternally ;
Here in the golden meadows
Where no sinning and striving and weeping,
No terrors and pains and regret
Mar the perfect days
That softly fall upon the ground
Like ripened golden apples
From the tree of Time ;
They sit and dream and slumber
Dreaming wondrous dreams.

Yet on their faces lie shadows
As if some pain,
Some gentle melancholy,
Had come to them,
Floating over their souls
Like love-drenched tunes
Long-forgotten.

Is it the songs
Of the mad-throated singers
High in the tree-tops,
Flinging their little hearts away
In streams of melodies
Full of poignant pain and sorrow,
That make them sad?

Is it the heavy perfume
Of innumerable flowers
Stealing over their senses
Like drugged wine,
Making their eyes shut in slumber,
Bringing a tinge of sadness
Upon their faces?

Or is it that they dream
Of the long-remembered face
Of mighty Hercules,
When he came sailing
Over the mountainous waves of the ocean
To steal the golden apples
From the Garden of Hesperides?

SYMPHONY TRAGICA.

I.

Darkness !
Darkness like the blind, black mouth
Of Death
Swallows up the world.
(*Darkness—Darkness*
And the tolling of huge, iron bells.)
The sky is a heavy mask
Of black velvet
Hiding the demoniac face
Of some terrible power
Sullenly brooding,
Far in the tragic
Abyss of the night.

The darkness is a mighty lion
Hungry for prey,
Standing with his heavy feet
Upon the breast of the world.
And the air,
Hot and oppressive,
Clutching the throat
Like an iron hand
Is the arid breath
From his nostrils.

The darkness is a huge, black vulture
Gnawing at the heart of the world.

II.

The shrivelled bushes
Squatting by the river,
Crushed by an iron weight
That reaches forth from the sky,
Are like multitudes of stricken people
Huddled together,
Bent down beneath the weight
Of endless misery
And endless pain.

And the gaunt, naked trees
Piercing the gloom,
Are the fleshless nail-pierced hands
Of numberless men
Crucified upon forests
Of black crosses,
Raised in futile prayer
To the terrible unknown
God of terror.

While the river
That lies below them,
Is of their bitter tears
Ceaselessly flowing
Thru the ages.
Bearing upon its bosom
The withered leaves
Of all their hopes and desires
And the dead branches
Of their lives:
*(Ah! the darkness—the darkness—
And the tears falling, falling.)*

The wind that moans and groans
As it blindly wanders
Thru the fathomless night,
Seeking for rest
Or solace from sorrow,
Is the bitter cry of anguish
Coming from the breasts
Of the dark people
Overwhelmed by the drowning
Waves of darkness.

Sorrow!
Darkness and sorrow
Crush the earth
Between their iron hands.
Sorrow and terror
Stride upon a path
Of the bleeding hearts
Of those who were only born
For woe and pain and death.

III.

Silence like the weight of doom—
Only broken by the wailing
Of lost souls,
Wandering—wandering—wandering
Thru the forests of the night.
Then the voice of Mankind
Crying in its bitter anguish
Scaled the cliffs of darkness :
“ Lord! Lord!
Why hast thou forsaken us?
Have compassion on thy children!
Help us, for we die!”

A streak of vivid lightning
Like the face of some dead, drowned man
Flashed across the sky,
Lighting up the darkness
With its sinister glare.
Then the voice of God
Majestic in its anger
Reverberated thru the world :
“ I have made the world for freedmen
And ye are slaves.
Life is for those who dare
And ye are cowards,
Worshipping before Gods of mud and gold.
There is no heaven and no hell
Except it be upon this earth,
And ye have made it hell.
Let it be destroyed!”

Then the world,
Blindly moving
Thru the vast abysmal cave of darkness,
Tottered on the brink
Of Nothingness
And fell. . . .

SEA SYMPHONY.

I.

Dawn
Upon an endless waste
Of swaying waves
Who rear their maddened heads
Against the sullen background
Of a tattered sky.

I see
The sudden glimpse
Of noble figures raised aloft,
The naked forms half-hid
By clouds of driven spray ;
The gleam of spears
Uplifted—
Shouting their ancient cries
The Gods ride forth to battle
On the stallions of the waves.

The hosts of night
Are vanquished
And the copper gates of day
Slowly open—
Lo !
The Sun-God !
Apollo !

II.

O Sea—
Thou haughty savage—
Thou dread one,
Roving wildly over thy domain
Like a mighty raging lion
In search of prey.
Blinding the eyes of heaven
With thy wind-tossed hair ;
Flinging thy body heavenward
With gigantic leaps
Till the sagging sky
Seems part of thee.

In the pale hours
Of the ghastly dawn,
I stand upon thy shores
And listen to the broken rhythms
Of the husky songs
That speak of infinity
Beyond our ken.
And the gipsy winds
Wander thru my hair,
And the broken spray
Clutches at my face
With crooked fingers.

III.

O wild bold Sea!
O Comrade!
For we are both
Children of the restless soul
Never content to sit and rest,
But flinging our souls skyward
In deathless endeavor
To reach the unattainable;
Ever yearning to know
That which we cannot know.

O grand and timeless one!
O seeker after mighty mysteries!
O destroyer and preserver!
Break the chains that bind
My soul to earth!
Make me free
As yon sea-gull
Flying thru the storm!
Wash me clean
Of all the little lies and greeds and lusts
That fill the man-made cities!
Mold me in thy image
Pure and strong as thee!
Make me the echo of the mighty voice
And the trumpet of thy prophecy!
Give me the visions
So that I may sing
Great songs for a new age!

Songs and Nocturnes

*Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu.*

—KEATS.

DE PROFUNDIS.

Out of the depths, O Lord, the depths we cry,
We the burden bearers of the world who lie
Forsaken, broken, downtrodden till we die.

We the great disinherited
We who have been tortured till we bled,
Who pay with blood for every scrap of bread.

Out of the depths of sorrow and of pain,
Where life grows burdensome, where souls fall slain,
To us no joys, no peace, no hopes remain.

Processions of the long years come and go;
Our hearts are broken with their weight of woe,
Our heads by their iron feet are trodden low.

Oppression's heavy heel is on our breast,
Around our limbs the ruthless chains are prest
And never peace to us, and never rest.

Our days are filled with strife and haunting fears;
The restless nights are filled with bitter tears;
And none doth stretch a hand and no one hears.

Life's joys are not for us, for all in vain
We strive to taste its sweets again and again,
We were born for death and woe and pain.

We stretch forth hands of longing and desire;
We pray to Thee and our tears are hot with the fire
Of our hearts, and we but gather dust in the mire.

Gaze on thy children Thou didst mould so fair!
Dost Thou know us, filled with wild despair,
Our bodies warped and crushed by weight of care?

Gaze on these things Thou mad'st to rule the earth!
So starved, so tortured from the doors of birth,
Who have not even laughed, known joy, made mirth.

O God of pity, God of good, august,
Behold us writhing, trodden in Thy dust,
Truth is vanquished; Earth lies ruled by Lust.

Right lies beneath the feet of Wrong;
And Falsehood stalks the Earth with Evil strong.
How long shall it be thus—how long—how long?

Ghastly hunger clutches our throats and we die
So that the riches of a few may multiply,
O Lord, O God of Truth! Why? Why?

We pray to Thee, but our fears increase;
Why do we suffer without a hope of peace?
When will it cease, O Lord, when will it cease?

See us shackled by our fellow-men;
When wilt Thou aid us? We are lost till then.
When wilt Thou save us? When wilt Thou free us? When?

By our wives and children worn with toil and fear—
By their lives so bleak without a spark of cheer—
By our pain and misery—Hear! O hear!

Hear Thy children who have long implored—
Loose Thy wrath and with Thy mighty sword
Break the chains that bind us—Lord! Lord!

Nine Songs from Maeterlinck's "Pallas and Melisande"

I. TO MELISANDE WHO WEEPS.

"*Why weepest thou?*"—Golaud, Act I, Scene I.

Wherfore dost thou weep,
Melisande?
Are thy sorrows deep,
Melisande?
When joy can still be had
Why art thou wan and sad?
Wherfore dost thou weep,
Melisande?

Sorrow cometh soon,
Melisande,
Joy is a precious boon,
Melisande.
Come dry thy lovely eyes—
Youth is not for sighs;
Sorrow cometh soon,
Melisande.

Live while youth is bright,
Melisande;
Shadows come with night,
Melisande.

Tears will come again,
We were born for pain;
Live while youth is bright,
Melisande.

Live while thou art fair,
Melisande.
Soon come age and care,
Melisande.
Beauty disappears
When come the weary years;
Live while thou art fair,
Melisande.

Know there still is love,
Melisande.
Hast thou known thereof,
Melisande?
Tho life doth make thee know
All her pain and woe,
Know there still is love,
Melisande.

II. LOST.

"I am lost! lost!"—Melisande, Act I, Scene I.

The mist comes groping for the sand—
A blinded beggar with stricken hand.
We are children lost in an unknown land.

The sea-gulls scream and wildly fly
Beneath a storm-swept thunder-shattered sky.
We are shadows born to fade and die.

The clouds like cloaks of Darkness blight
The sky, the sun is lost to sight.
We pass from night into darker night.

III. HAPPINESS.

"We shall never find it again."—Melisande, Act II, Scene I.

Happiness can never come again
To those who fling it far away.
We who said to tender Love, " Nay,
We do not want you to remain,"

Long will pray and ask for Love in vain;
But He will come and sadly say,
" Happiness can never come again
To those who fling it far away."

Youth will 'neath the weight of years be slain
And age will come the old, old way,
And in our tortured hearts will be the grey
Ashes of our bitter pain.
Happiness can never come again.

IV. LIFE AND LOVE.

"What has happened, Melisande? . . . Some one has done thee harm?"—Golaud, Act II, Scene II.

Life and Love have done me harm,
Life and Love together.
Life that was so full of charm
Fills me now with great alarm.
Love that was so fair and gay
Has stolen all my dreams away.
Life and Love have done no harm,
Life and Love together.

Life and Love are cruel to me
Life and Love together.
Life that was so full of glee
Asks my happiness as fee.
Love that was so sweet and fair
Fills my heart with woe and care.
Life and Love are cruel to me,
Life and Love together.

V. PRAYER.

*"If I were God, I would have pity on men's hearts."—
Arkël, Act IV, Scene II.*

O God! have pity on our hearts
That bear so much of pain and strife,
Thou only knowest what our parts
Are in the tragedy of life.

For love with fires unconsumed,
For truth and justice sold in marts,
For grief that lives and pleasure doomed
O God! have pity on our hearts.

For yearnings never satisfied,
For happiness that soon departs,
For souls beneath great burdens tried,
O God! have pity on our hearts.

Thou knowest we are born in pain
That never leaves us till we die,
And is the sacrifice in vain?
Does laughter come after a sigh?

Will joy come with the morning's light
Tho all the night is filled with tears?
Is there some beacon shining bright
Beyond the darkness and the fears?

For why must we be born at all
If life's achievement is but death,
If we are lost beyond recall
When ends our little mortal breath?

DAWN.

The darkness fades and ends;
A slow hazy rain
Wearily descends.

The dull, drear dawn again
Falls from the leaden sky
Upon a world of pain.

The brooding clouds on high
Are like the weary bands
Of the world's sorrows that lie

Within my heart. There stands
Upon the hill a tree,
Stretching forth gaunt hands

Like a hungry beggar we see
Begging for alms on the streets;
So I stand yearning for Thee.

JASCHA HEIFETZ.

I am faint with too much beauty.

I am a piece of driftwood
Floating here and there
Upon the sea
Of wondrous sounds.
I am a leaf
Whirled aloft
By the mighty north wind
Until I frolic with the stars.
I am drowned
Beneath the rainbow-colored
Raptured waves
Of magic melody.

Out of the violin
Two shadowy figures
Come dancing towards me
Hand in hand.

Joy—
With coal-black eyes
Of living fire,
And two crimson rosebud lips
That kiss me,
Till mad with passion
I hold forth my arms
To grasp her who disappears.

Then Sorrow—
With petulant lips
Murmurs consoling words,
Bitter-sweet,
Till, charmed by her lovely voice
I am half in love
With pain.

I am faint with too much beauty.

EVENING.

Dusk o'er the world
And the day is dying,
Slowly, slowly
The gray mist is stealing
Over the hills,
Leading the evening
Over the sky,
Wrapping the languorous landscape
In velvet shadows
Till it fadeth away
Like a dream.

Silence, sweet silence;
Nature lieth adoring,
Awed by the power of God.
Not a leaf moveth,
Not a wind stirreth,
The trees and the grasses are bending low,
The birds that have soared thru the sky
Pouring forth music,
Full of delight,
Now cease their sweet songs;
Nature is saying its evening prayers
Before it closeth its eyes
And falleth asleep.

Over the river
See the lights of the city
Gleaming so brightly,

Like some bright fireflies
Poised mid the veil of the haze,
Or like some jewels
Sparkling brightly
In the dusky hair of night.

Lo—the bright stars
Lean from the sky
Like the watchfires of God
On the hills of the heavens,
Or like some great host
Of wondrous angels
Clad in raiment
Of shimmering silver,
Singing sweet praises
Of their great Lord.

Like a mother,
With infinite tenderness
The evening is lulling
The world that is weary
To rest;
Like a leaf that has withered
In the heat of the noon,
The day softly falls
From the tree
Of Time.

SACRIFICE.

The Gods
Must be appeased,
And we
Must place our sacrifices
On their altars.

Some offer up the gold
For which they spent
Their years ;
Some offer little songs
In which they poured
Their souls ;
And some great loves
Within whose flames
They flung their lives ;
For all must give
Their heart's desire.

We pay for life—
With years of youth
That pass before we are aware ;
With disillusioned dreams
And hopes that fade
With morning ;
With love that lasts
For but a moment ;
With vanishing of all things lovely ;
Some with bits of joy and happiness
And all
With pain and sorrow.

For brief moments of ecstasy
And little madnesses of love,
For fragrances of dreams
And sudden glimpse of beauty,
And memories ;
We offer up our sacrifices
Upon the altars of the Gods.

And when we have no longer
Any sacrifice to bring,
Darkness is before us—
And Death
Gathers all our dreams
And hopes and loves
Unto his bosom ;
Repaying all we sacrifice
With gifts
Of peace and sleep.

IN TIME OF WEARINESS.

*" . . . bitter meat,
The food of gods for men to eat."*

—FRANCIS THOMPSON.

Weary, weary is the life
Men lead upon this earth.
Full of pain and sorrow from our birth
Blindfolded we wander to and fro,
Not knowing where we go
Thru the maddening strife.
And the wide waste of years
Is filled with woes and tears
And God neither cares nor hears.
For we are caught within the net
Of life, and would be free, yet
While we have breath
There is no escape but death.

See the long, long files
Of mankind march along,
Stretching miles and miles.
See them go—
The young, the old,
The weak, the strong,
The rich and poor,
Climbing the steep
Path of life, till they creep,
Like weary sheep
Within the fold.
And behind—
God, the blind
Driver, drives them on with his lash
Of many-millioned pain,

Till they fall never to rise again.
Onward, ever onward they go
Full of weariness and woe,
The long, long files of mankind,
Driven, driven.

Love—

Let our hearts no longer aspire
With great desire
For heaven above;
Or they will break in vain
Against the crags of woe and pain,
As the sea-birds in a hurricane
Buffeted by wild wind and wave,
Suddenly see the light
Of the light-house, shining bright
As if to save;
But as they fly
With hopes raised high,
Are impelled by the wind,
And with their eyes made blind
By the light so near,
Are dashed against the rocks they fear
And flutter down upon the waves
With broken wings.

Dear—

Let us be content
That we are near
To one another,
And with the love that is sent
To us, for there is nothing worth
Having or striving for upon the earth
Or in heaven above,
But love.

STORMY NIGHT.

The wind comes moaning all the night
At the door,
Like the cry of pain from the world
Stricken sore.

The rain comes pouring in the dark
Like the tears
Of a people sitting forsaken
Many years.

The night with weary footsteps moves
Across the skies,
The ghastly dawn comes peering in
With haggard eyes.

DRINKING SONG.

Life is made for living—
 Drink it down—
For taking joy and giving—
 Drink it down—
When maids are young and fair,
When wine is old and rare,
We banish dreary care—
 Drink it down.

Hail the king of laughter—
 Drink it down—
Who cares what will come after—
 Drink it down—
When hearts are young and free
And Pan is God of glee
Let's drain the cup to the lee—
 Drink it down.

When good friends get together—
 Drink it down—
In fair or stormy weather—
 Drink it down—
There's a toast to pleasure
To friendship the greatest treasure.
Here's to the sparkling measure—
 Drink it down.

MELODIES.

Rhyming, chiming melodies
Full of wonderful delight,
Fresh as morning's fragrant rain.
Weave their magic fairy chain
Rosy as the baby morn
Beaming when 'tis newly born;
Filled with laughter, fair and bright.
Gleaming as the golden light
O'er my heart and soul and brain.

Swinging, ringing melodies
Weave their olden golden spell
From the tales of old romance,
Telling tales of love and chance;
Armor shining, banners flying—
Gallant knights for freedom dying—
Sweet and lovely maids that dwell
High in lofty citadel—
Songs that cause the blood to dance.

Haunting, taunting melodies
Coming from an island fair,
A sunshine-haunted fairyland,
One of a sparkling jeweled band
Upon a gleaming sapphire sea,
Where a siren wild and free
Sits, and as she combs her hair
Fills the perfume-laden air
With silver streams of song most grand.

Throbbing, sobbing melodies
Filled with the passion of the years,
Sweeping from the human heart
Where the webs of life start;
Spun and woven by the Fates
Of mingled threads of loves and hates,
Of human hopes and human fears,
Human joys and human tears;
Songs that make the world their mart.

A FACE IN THE RAIN.

A curtain of rain in the night
And a face that shines thru the rain,
A burden of pain in my breast
And a splendor of joy in my pain.

Thru lonely hours of night,
Thru darkness and sorrow and pain,
Your face will come like a star
To haunt me with beauty again.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF THOREAU'S
"FRIENDSHIP."

With this book of friendship
 Take my friendship true,
Life's most noble gift
 I give with this to you.

Mid the fears and darkness,
 Mid the woes and strife,
Friendship is the beacon-light
 Upon the road of life.

Prize the gift I give you,
 Hold it far apart
From the common things of life—
 A jewel in your heart.

NOCTURNE.

Fate,
That broken-hearted mad musician,
Sits outside the gate
Of my heart
And plays
Upon the broken lute of my life,
Pouring forth
Bitter poignant tunes.

My life is a broken lute,
And my love
Is a bird
With broken wings.

PHANTOMS IN THE RAIN.

(*To a Nocturne of Chopin.*)

Upon the world the darkness lies
Like a leaden pall,
Upon my soul that is filled with pain
Its sombre shadows fall.

Ghosts of long-forgotten dreams
Walk with the lonely rain,
And with their long white shivering hands
Beat on my window-pane.

And the sorrowful faces of old, old loves
Who never, never rest,
Come to open the half-healed wounds
Within my aching breast.

WHEN SUMMER COMES.

When summer comes with lovely face
 And blushes o'er the world below,
With love and happiness aglow
 And beautiful with charm and grace,

Away with all that's low and base
 For hearts with laughter overflow,
When summer comes with lovely face
 And blushes o'er the world below.

The merry brooklets fly apace,
 The perfume-laden breezes blow,
The sweet and fragrant flowers grow
 And in the sky the swallows race
When summer comes with lovely face.

QUESTIONS.

Years that are hid in the wallet of Time,
O what will you have for me,
Joy and sweet love that are sublime
Or sorrow and misery?

Years in whose hands my fate is laid,
O what will you bring to me,
Achievements of splendor that never will fade
Or phantom dreams that flee?

Years in the gulf of the Future concealed,
O where will you lead me,
Up to the summits of song unrevealed
Or down on the lowly lea?

Years that are spun by the hidden Fates,
O what do you store for me?
Youth stands on your shores and awaits
Your unchanging decree.

A JUNE DAY.

(*A Fantasy.*)

A day that was blown from the mouth of June,
From the red, red lips of June,
Came dancing along from wonderland
While the fairies were playing a merry tune
And the birds in a skyward soaring band
Were flooding the fields with melodies grand.

O the lips were made of two crimson roses
Of the day that was blown from the mouth of June,
From the red, red lips of June,
And within her lovely laughing eyes
Lay the glorious light that reposes
In the silvery sunshine-haunted skies
Of wonder-laden paradise.

Wherever she trod with her dainty feet
Flowers blossomed in purple and gold,
And the air was swooning with their perfume so sweet,
And the songs of the summer-mad birds unfold
Till my heart was a-dancing with joy untold
For a day had been blown from the mouth of June,
From the red, red lips of June.

LIFE.

Life is honey-sweet, but ah! so fleet—
For the years with swiftly hurried feet
Like phantom shadows onward stream—
Soon life is faded like a youthful dream.

A little laughter mid the aching pain,
A little sunshine mid the rain,
One little joyful, tearful hour—
Then life is withered like a dying flower.

A taste of sweetness in the wine of life,
A little love amid the strife,
Soon, too soon our race is run—
For life is dying like the sinking sun.

A little done from all there is to do,
A little striving towards the true,
A little yearning for the sun—
The book of life is written and is done.

SHATTERED DREAMS.

Sweet it is to dream
When dreams are young and new,
Blissful youth is sure
That they will all come true.

Life takes them in his hands
And oh, how soon they break,
Sweet it is to dream,
But bitter to awake.

IF.

If we could capture
April rapture
And weave it into song,
So when weadden
Hearts will gladden
With thoughts that make us strong.

If pain would never
Come to sever
Youth's dreams and hopes so bright,
Then we could treasure
Joy and pleasure
And make life one delight.

Ah, Love! if this is
What our kisses
Tell us, you are sweet,
If we could weather
Life together,
Then joy would be complete.

Love Songs

*"Love came by with merry laughter,
He beckoned and I followed after."*

—THE AWAKENING.

THE AWAKENING.

I laid my head upon the breast of sleep
(I was weary, ah, so weary)

I wished to drown my cares in slumber deep
(Life was dreary, dull and dreary.)

She lulled me with her drowsy song to rest
(I was weary, ah, so weary)

“Forget your woes upon my peaceful breast
(Life is dreary, dull and dreary.”)

But Love came dancing by with merry laughter
(I was weary, ah, so weary)

Then he beckoned and I followed after
(Life is cheery, bright and cheery.)

LOVE CAME KNOCKING AT THE DOOR.

Love came gently knocking at the door
Bringing happiness in goodly store;

And I bade him enter;
I said to gloomy sorrow, "Now depart,
For love so sweet is come within my heart;"
And forth in haste I sent her.

I built a splendid throne for love to hold,
Of fairest dreams and ivory and gold,
For him and him alone;
I looked, and love and sorrow side by side
Were sitting like a bridegroom and a bride
Upon the lofty throne.

A MAIDEN THAT I KNOW.

There's a maiden that I know,
Sweet, demure and shy,
Oh, that Cupid would let fly
An arrow from his bow
To pierce her lovely breast
And fill with great unrest
Her bosom white as snow!

There's a maiden that I know,
With eyes in which there lies
The splendor of the evening skies.
But if Love should come and show
A little trick or two
That he can use to woo,
Her eyes like stars would glow.

There's a maiden that I know,
With a golden voice
That ever makes my soul rejoice.
Yet if she knew love's woe
And joy and happiness,
Her song like a sweet caress
From her heart would flow.

There's a maiden that I know,
That like a red, red rose
Within a dew-sweet garden grows.
And I love roses so
That I will try my luck
And see if I can pluck
The fairest of flowers that grow.

WHERE MEMORY DWELLS.

Where memory dwells within my heart
 There dwells your dear, dear face,
Your lovely ways, your lyric voice,
 Your tantalizing grace.

Love is the greatest gift of all,
 But not a gift for me,
Within my heart where Love should dwell
 There dwells a memory.

BY THE FIRESIDE.

We sat beside the fire
Watching the flames
Leap like living things,
Casting fantastic shadows upon the walls.
While without,
The ashen skies wept bitter tears,
And the winds
Cried out the ancient sorrows
Of the world.

Then—our lips met
Seeking beyond the kiss,
And our souls
Leaped like the flames
Higher and higher,
Searching for perfection—
Yearning for the unattainable.

Love—
Let us live
While we have youth and hope,
And the future
Lies before us,
An unexplored country for us to conquer,
Let us drink the wine of love,
Draining the cup;
For life
Is a mighty storm
That sweeps away
Youth and hope,
And even love.
And who knows how soon
Fate may make us eat
The bread of sorrow,
And drink
The waters of bitterness?

LOVE—MY HEART IS THINE.

Love—why should we have to search for one another?

Happiness is such a frail and seldom thing,
Surely we should have some little joys and pleasures
Strengthen our hearts to bear what Life will bring.

Oh, how many of us seek and never find Thee,
Art Thou but a chimera to mock our years?
Toy of Fate who likes to taunt with fragile visions
Man whose life is but a dream that disappears.

I have built a tall white shrine within my bosom
Where I will worship Thee and all Thy wants fulfill,
What the price of love is I know not, but I will pay it.
Love—my heart is Thine, do with it what you will.

PARADISE.

The beauty of a thousand springs
Within your eyes,
Upon your face the radiance
Of paradise.

You look at me—the love-light shines
Within your eyes,
You are mine—do I need more
Of paradise?

AN EVENING IN MAY.

The silken wings of evening
Were spread across the sky,
The stars like lovely angels
Softly sang on high.

The moon was hung aloft
A Chinese lantern bright,
Or like a yellow sunflower
Upon the breast of night.

Mystery and beauty
Appeared before our eyes,
We sat below filled
With wonder and surprise.

Then as if to make
The loveliness complete,
You gave your lips to me,
So fair and soft and sweet.

TO _____.

I saw the matchless beauty of your face .
And all your body's lovely charm and grace,
Your eyes like two great pools of living fire
Fed by flames of love and great desire;
Your lips like some fair crimson dew-sweet rose
That in a sun-bathed southern garden grows ;
I saw your face, and all the love I bore
Rose till I could not check it any more.

I heard you sing a merry little song
And all the wondrous, silver sounds you flung
Were little golden birds that winged their way
Into my breast and built their nests and lay
Upon the branches of my heart and sang
Such songs that all my soul with beauty rang ;
I heard you sing and your voice was a sweet caress
Till I was aflame with your great loveliness.

I am alone amid the roaring crowd
Or sit at home o'er some volume bowed,
Yet still your picture shines before my eyes
With loveliness a gift from paradise,
And still I hear your tender magic voice
That makes my heart and all my soul rejoice ;
I am alone and yet am not alone,
For you are near, a vision never gone.

EVENING SONG.

(*To Music.*)

Dew on the petals of roses
And thoughts in my heart of you,
When the evening its splendor uncloses
And the moon like a flower reposes
On the skies like your eyes of blue.

Stars like bright censers a-swinging,
Scattering sweet perfume,
And dreams of you come singing
Like fair white birds a-winging
Out of the heart of gloom.

SONG.

(*To Music.*)

In the heart of the sunset a rose,
On the breast of the evening a star,
And the heart within me knows
That you think of me from afar.

The sun in the heavens above,
On the face of the waters the moon,
Come to my arms, O my Love,
For the darkness is coming soon.

IN EXILE.

Your face like a golden star
Shines across the sea,
Your soul like a white bird flies
O'er the waves to me,
And fills my lonely heart
Full of melody.

I thought that heaven was lost
When I did depart,
But soul communes with soul,
Heart beats to heart,
For we are together, tho'
Many miles apart.

TO A RED ROSE.

Rose fragrance floating in the dusk
Brings sweet thoughts of you,
Soft music heard when shadows fall
Bring memories anew,
And when the stars come dancing out
I see your eyes of blue.

My Love is like a wild red rose,
Blooming sweet and fair,
I love my fragrant wild red rose
With love beyond compare,
And I would pluck her for my heart
If I would only dare.

LOVE ME LITTLE—LOVE ME LONG.

Love me little—love me long,
Fickle as the weather,
Love is like a vagrant wind
That cannot bide a tether.

Love remains in memory
Even tho it passes,
Love me little—love me long,
All you merry lasses.

Sonnets

THE MAN OF THE FUTURE.

(*From the painting by Gari Melchers.*)

She stands and strains her baby to her breast.
A silent victim to the God of Death,
A mute but unforgettable protest
Against the bloody war, whose blazing breath

Swept all away and left her desolate.
Within her eyes the pain and woe and sorrow
Of all the multitudes of women whom Fate
Has bereft of all they love. To-morrow

Stretches out before her drear and dark.
As in a dream she sees her only son
Now grown, like his father cold and stark,
Another victim to the hellish gun.

What can you, O rulers and kings, reply
To her whose stricken soul questions “ Why? ”

THEY THAT WALK IN DARKNESS.

They walk in darkness and dreadful desolation
Having dust for bread and bitter tears
For drink and stones to sleep upon. A nation,
Once beautiful, now full of woes and fears,

Of slaughtered men, broken-hearted wives
And mothers ; a land of many-millioned pain
Where the monster War battens on lives
Swept away like dust before the rain.

Like Niobe, Belgium stands and mourns
Her noble sons who for liberty have died.
She whose head now wears a crown of thorns
(For great love is always crucified)

Will not have suffered in vain when we see unfurled
The banner of the Federation of the World.

THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN.

*"All the hours are theirs and all the seasons—
Death hath but his hour."*

—SWINBURNE.

They are not dead, for tho' their bodies lie
In many nameless graves so far away,
Their gallant souls live on forever. They
Flung their splendid youths away with gay

Laughter, storming the parapets of hell
And clasping Death like a lovely bride
Within their arms, until like heroes they fell
To save a stricken world. They have not died

Nor have they fallen in vain. Their souls live on,
And like great flashing silver swords of light
Lead the hosts of Freedom to the Dawn
Thru the darkness of a bitter night

Where the thorny path of War was trod
That led unto the altar stairs of God.

SLEEPING BEAUTY.

Her life was like a brief but lovely dream—
And when it ended, she shut her eyes so bright
Like a flower when comes the gloomy night,
And fell asleep. A hundred years did onward stream
And then her gallant lover came to redeem
Her from the dark of sleep into the light;
He kissed her rosy lips and with delight
She awoke within his arms to love supreme.
And so we dream and strive a little while
Till called by death, and then we fall asleep
Like tired children after play, and deep
In slumber lie, until our lover God above
Doth kiss our lips, and then with a joyful smile
We wake to perfect happiness and love.

THE BETRAYAL.

One day thru open windows of my heart
Wan Love came flying in with weary wing
And poor blind eyes from which the tears did start
And head so weary crowned with thorns that sting.

With gentle hands I fondled him and bound
His wounds and gave him drink of sweetest song
And eat of dearest hopes until he found
His strength, and grew more beautiful and strong.

And then he sang a song of mockery
Taunting me with weakness and flew away,
Leaving me alone with misery
And pain and broken dreams that haunt the day

With hopes of happiness that might have made
My art an instrument divinely played.

DARKNESS.

"E guro 'l minuetto, ma tavolta piangi."

—FOGAZARRO.

We pass from the dark into the dark.
From the blinding blackness of the womb
To the darkness of the grave, where we lie stark
And cold, and all is over ; and to whom

Is given to know what comes after ?
When the path of life is trod, is it found
When the tears are over and the little laughter,
That there's nothing left but a hole in the ground ?

And behind the futile struggles and the fears,
The vain dreams of love and truth, the hates,
The sorrows, the laughter and the bitter tears
Of man, we hear the voices of the Fates

Thru the darkness, mocking the strife
And the hollow mockery of life.

THE CITY IN A FOG.

"... bounded hearts which yet would girth the sea."

—FRANCIS THOMPSON.

I.

From out her coral cave beneath the sea
The sea-mist maiden swims across the sky,
And folds the lamp-lit city tenderly
Within her cloak of darkness. While on high
The stars that hang like silver lanterns bright
Above the gardens of the heavens, gleam
A little while and then are lost to sight
Like things that come to us within a dream.

The mist is fragrant with the perfumed breath
Of moonlit seas and gentle as the touch
Of the rest-giving tender hands of Death
When laid upon our hearts that suffer much
From life, and then the bitter sorrows cease
And there is left the heritage of peace.

II.

But thru the darkness surge the spray-crowned waves
Who toss their long white hands into the air
As if in prayer to a God who saves
From pain and misery that all must share.

Or as if they yearn to clasp within
Their outstretched arms the hidden stars, or climb
The unseen mountains of the moon and win
Some higher happiness or hear some rime

That none have heard before; and then like those
Who ask too much from life or yearn for the sun
And do not know that like a fragile rose
Our joys bloom for a moment, then are gone.

They fall upon the rocks with a bitter cry
And break their hearts upon the crags and die.

THE POET TO HIS MISTRESS.

Some say thou art so beautiful, O Death,
So fair the night when ends the crude harsh day,
Some praise thy poignant poppy-laden breath
And some thy fair white breasts on which to lay

A wearied head, when all the pain and strife
Is over, when the heart doth seek surcease
Of all the sad uncertainties of Life
And yearns to drink the cool sweet wine of peace.

But I will sing no lays to celebrate
Thy loveliness, O Death, but loud and clear
Such songs of thee, O Life, will I create
That even God will turn his head to hear.

Within thy flames, O Life, I cast my soul,
It will not matter much how great the toll.

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